

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment in reply to the Office Action dated February 25, 2004. As an initial matter, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of the allowance of claims 1-9.

Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that "the prior art of record either alone or in combination, neither discloses nor makes obvious the combination of a thermal development apparatus and/or image recording apparatus where the pressing rollers and the partially cylindrical surface of the heating drum are specifically designed for satisfying conditions as recited in the instant claims." Applicants would like to clarify that claims 1-3 do not recite an image recording apparatus, and that each of claims 1-9 recite a unique combination of features that do not necessarily include features recited in other claims.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Abstract and the specification. Applicants submit herewith a substitute Abstract on a separate sheet of paper and amend the specification as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding objections.

Furthermore, Applicants have further amended the specification and claim 3 to correct inadvertent typographical errors.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.


In discussing the specification, claims, abstract, and drawings in this Amendment, it is to be understood that Applicants are in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification or abstract and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicants are entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this Amendment and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: April 7, 2004

By: 
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Attachments: Abstract